

Although we receive stories weekly from our recipients about how much their Hearing Dog has helped alert them to many sounds in the home and in public, to robbers, potential dangers, people in need of help, even natural disasters such as earthquakes; two special Hearing Dogs are "Spanky" and "Taylor." Here are their stories told by the recipients.

1. On an afternoon in May, in Nevada, Spanky was just doing his job, alerting Wanda to the sounds in the home. "I had gone to my room to take a nap," said Wanda. "Spanky followed me and layed at my feet as he always does." However, this was no ordinary afternoon, for someone set two fires in Wanda's apartment complex. "About an hour later, Spanky woke me up by pulling on the blankets and my arm. I was not sure what was going on at first but I noticed smoke coming from the bathroom. I grabbed Spanky, woke my husband, who was sleeping on the living room couch, and called 911...there had been another fire going on in my apartment complex and the fire department came within a few minutes, save our belongings but not our apartment. The media was there and did a story on Spanky. I was so proud of him! I had only had Spanky for three months when this happened. I feel if it was not for Spanky alerting me to the fire, I would have been hurt or killed. For some reason, my husband did not wake either when the smoke alarm went off. So Spanky saved both of us."
2. Alyce in Colorado wrote to International Hearing Dog, Inc. that, "Taylor has become my second best friend and goes everywhere with me. At home, I don't always wear my hearing aides. Taylor has learned to alert me to the microwave bell and the dryer buzzer all on her own without my training her to do so. She comes running to get me and at first, I wasn't paying attention to what she was trying to tell me but after she got me trained to 'listen' to her, I was amazed at her cunning.

She always alerts me to someone coming up behind or beside me when we go out for our walks by pushing against my left leg or jumping on my backside to get me out of the way. She has found ways that work for us to alert me to the phone ringing, door knocks, and the smoke alarm.

My life is so much fuller with Taylor in it. I did not realize how I had become slightly isolated because of my hearing and being out in public. When I am in a restaurant, Taylor actually lets me know when someone is talking to me that I hadn't noticed. I can go on and on about the wonderful things that Taylor does for me and everyone around her.

I am very active as a Boy Scout Volunteer with Special Needs Scouts. We have a transitional troop of disabled boys that I work with. Taylor has become the mascot for this troop. She has a very calming affect on the more hyper boys and the autistic boys react to her in a way that has amazed the parents and leaders.

Taylor and I were at a training meeting in a private home and she was lying quietly at my feet until she suddenly jumped up and looked at me. I settled her down and then she jumped up again. I asked the woman whose house we were in if there was something behind us. She responded as she walked to a door leading upstairs and found her 10 month old son standing at the top of the stairs. Taylor saved that child from what could have been a very serious tumble down a big flight of stairs.

She was requested to visit a friend of mine at University Hospital that was undergoing chemotherapy treatments. When my friend was too weak to reach down to pet Taylor, she asked for her to be on the bed. Taylor, my ADD dog, laid for over an hour on the bed quietly just moving her head when she wanted my friend's hand on her head. Everyone was absolutely amazed how her vital signs became much better.

I thank you so much for giving me the honor of being Taylor's 'mom.' She is such a big part of our lives and the subject of a lot of laughter."